



U.S. Department of Justice
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NEWS RELEASE

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GALENA, KANSAS, MAN SENTENCED FOR CONSPIRACY TO OBSTRUCT THE UNITED STATES IN A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

WICHITA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **Clarence T. Brandenburg**, 66, Galena, Kansas, was sentenced on January 26, 2004, by U.S. District Judge Monti L. Belot to **21 months in federal prison, without parole, to be followed by three years of supervised release and ordered to pay \$5,055,670.08 in restitution.**

Melgren said that Brandenburg was convicted on October 23, 2003, following a five day jury trial to one count of conspiracy to obstruct the United States in a criminal investigation, one count of obstruction of justice, and one count of perjury.

Melgren stated that according to testimony presented at trial, Brandenburg along with his wife, **Elesa L. Brandenburg**, 56, Galena, Kansas, conspired to obstruct the United States in a criminal investigation by misleading the Department of Defense into believing that the records of L&T Seals, Inc., a company they owned that sold O-rings and seals to the Department of Defense, had been destroyed in a flood prior to the records being requested by the Department of Defense, when in fact they had burned the records after the request. According to testimony, the O-rings and seals supplied by L&T Seals, Inc., to the Department of Defense did not comply with military specifications. L&T Seals, Inc., purchased these O-rings and seals in bulk, from commercial manufacturers, and then repackaged each O-ring or seal individually and affixed a label which falsely identified them as meeting military specifications. These O-rings and seals were used by the Department of Defense in military aircraft. According to trial testimony, Brandenburg committed perjury on March 13, 2002, before a grand jury when he testified that the records sought by the Department of Defense had been destroyed by a flood prior to the request for the records.

Co-defendant **Elesa L. Brandenburg** entered a guilty plea on July 7, 2003, to one count of conspiracy to obstruct the United States in a criminal investigation. Brandenburg was sentenced on September 23, 2003, to an additional 15 months in federal prison, without parole.

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Elesa Brandenburg, at the time of this sentencing, was serving a 30 month federal sentence for mail fraud.

Department of Justice attorney Peter Loewenberg stated that there were no serious accidents connected to these defective O-rings and seals although there were fuel leaks on military airplanes caused by these defective parts. The Department of Defense found and replaced all the defective O-rings and seals on military airplanes and purged these defective parts from the Department of Defense inventory.

The Court ordered this restitution to reimburse the Department of Defense for the cost of finding and replacing the defective O-rings and seals in military airplanes and in purging these defective parts from the Department of Defense inventory.

Melgren commended the excellent work of Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, in this investigation and Department of Justice attorney Peter Loewenberg in this prosecution.